

4104 Rosemary Street
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015
May 20, 1966

Dr. Leona Baumgartner
56 Washington Mews
New York, N.Y.

Dear Leona:

Dr. Ruthig telephoned the contents of your letter of May 17 regarding the utilization of special funds for leprosy. Before going further, I would point out that the existing incentives for the successful culturing of the causative organism are sufficiently great to preclude the necessity of an additional stimulus in the nature of a money prize.

The problem of how to use funds available from small foundations is a very real one. As you know, I spent many years with the Rockefeller Foundation and became convinced that spending money properly requires as much talent and care, or more, as does the making of it. The small foundation is not in a position to maintain an administrative staff to properly distribute funds without spending a disproportionate part of these resources for this purpose.

Another point which should be made is that the small foundation may be more effective for expenditures of a few years rather than attempting to live forever. Having covered the general principles briefly, let us turn to the leprosy problem.

This is a problem which has not attracted as much research and interest as one might wish, but still things are happening. Cases are being cured and released after long periods of treatment, and recently we have heard of the infection of animals on the foot pads. I am not keeping up with developments in leprosy as closely as I previously did but this gives you an idea. The Gorgas Memorial Laboratory is not working on the problem and will not be in a position to do so in the immediate future. Leprosy is a chronic disease, and breaking into this field should be done only by organizations in a position to plan and finance long-term studies.

The Leonard Wood Memorial is dedicated to the study of leprosy. Its present director is Dr. Chapman H. Binford, who succeeded Dr. James Doull a few years ago. The address of the Medical Department is 1832 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., telephone 338-5018. The Leonard Wood Memorial has been supporting epidemiological, therapeutic, and laboratory studies of leprosy for many years. They began supporting laboratory studies at the Hopkins School of Public Health about 1959 and I believe are still so engaged. If your friend is interested in contributing to leprosy, I feel that a contribution to the activities

of the Leonard Wood Memorial would probably be as useful as anything he could find.

On the other hand, if the commitment to leprosy is not firm, I would like to follow up on your reference to the Gorgas Memorial Institute. The Gorgas Memorial Institute is unique in that it was chartered by citizens and authorities of Panama and of the United States. Its Delaware charter was drawn up by John Bassett Moore, the first United States judge on the International Court at the Hague. The Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, which is operated by the Institute, is located in Panama City, where it operates under special arrangements with the national government. Most of the funds for the Laboratory come from the United States Government, which at present is contributing five hundred thousand dollars annually. The Laboratory has two new buildings erected during the past five years, one financed by the United States Government, the other from private sources.

During the year I was Secretary (1964-65), I became very much impressed with the potential of this organization, a potential largely unrealized. My experience as Secretary showed me that the further development of Gorgas is handicapped by the absence of a fulltime president of the parent Institute.

General Streit, who has been serving as President for several years, has advised the Executive Committee that he desires to retire this year at age 75. When this notice came to our attention a few weeks ago, I proposed that the change from an honorary parttime to a fulltime paid position be made at this time. The immediate question was raised as to how a President's salary could be financed without curtailing already existing programs in the Laboratory. The Congress has been willing in recent years to vote funds for a new building and has increased the operating budget for the first time this year to five hundred thousand dollars. (The Laboratory has been operating at this level for two or three years, supported in part by private funds which are no longer available.)

I feel certain that Congress will eventually do away with the five hundred thousand dollar-limit now established for annual operations and will, when that happens, be ready to provide funds for a President's salary.

Another need at Gorgas, not only for Gorgas but for the Middle America Research Unit and the medical schools of Panama and the surrounding countries, is a regional reference library. The Government of Panama has offered a site in the immediate vicinity of the Laboratory in Panama for the library building. The National Library of Medicine has offered an initial contribution of 50,000 volumes, which should make a very nice beginning. So soon as we have funds for the construction of a suitable building, we will be in a position to approach the other countries in the area for some participation in the support of the library. Once

some outside support is assured, there should be no difficulty in getting United States Government support in line with the support it gives to the Laboratory.

I am handing you herewith a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws, a copy of United States Legislation Concerning the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, and a copy of the 37th Annual Report of the Work and Operations of the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory for Fiscal 1965.

The individuals listed as incorporators of the Gorgas Memorial Institute were the President of Panama, the President of the National Board of Health of Panama, the Surgeon General of the United States Army, the Surgeon General of the United States Navy, the Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, the Director General of the Pan American Union, the Director General of the American College of Surgeons, the Surgeon General of the United States Navy, retired, and the United States Nominee to the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague.

Please give special attention to pages 1 and 2 of the Certificate of Incorporation which authorize the Institute to do just about anything one might want to do with regard to tropical diseases.

I have underscored in the United States Legislation concerning the Gorgas Memorial Laboratory, in paragraph 1, a part of Section (2), some of the phrases of special interest.

If I can be of any further help in attempting to make available funds reach a worthy cause, let me know.

As ever,

Fred L. Soper

Enclosures

FLS/mnc

P.S. I find my letter to you has failed to present definite suggestions. These are:

1. If the field of leprosy has top priority over everything else, I would recommend action through the Leonard Wood Memorial.

2. If support to the Gorgas Memorial Institute can be considered, I would suggest:

a. Provision for four or five years salary of a fulltime President, with expectation that it could be financed from other sources after the initial demonstration of its value.

b. Construction of a library building for a regional medical library to be operated by the Gorgas Memorial Institute in Panama. This library would be provided with a MEDIARS retrieval system so as to draw freely on the work done by the National Library of Medicine.